



Byzantine Catholic

Respect for Life

From Conception...

...to Natural Death

Human Life Begins At Conception

We Byzantine Catholics learn from the icon of the Annunciation that God became man when Mary accepted the message of Gabriel. At that moment Jesus was conceived. So it is with each of us; a person is created at conception. A human receives all of one's inherited characteristics as the sperm penetrates the egg....boy or girl...color of skin, hair, eyes....body build ... natural talents This is confirmed by science; we agree that a human person is pro-created.

What man is there among you who, if his child asks for bread, will give him a stone? Mt 7:9

*She received Gabriel's greeting
with faith and conceived you,
the God from before all ages,
for it was your inexpressible
good pleasure to become man
(1st Stichera, Annunciation vespers)*



Post Abortion Syndrome

Family, friends and clergy must be open to the pregnancy and the baby. Shame or the risk of being forced to leave home may force your daughter or wife to decide abortion is her only alternative.

Many women who have abortion are pro-life. In a survey 60%

In a survey 60% of women who had abortions responded their choice "was inconsistent with my prior beliefs."

responded my choice was inconsistent with my prior beliefs. *I felt my decision was a betrayal of my own ideals.*¹ Teaching that abortion is wrong is not enough....the person already knows it's wrong but her shame or abandonment (she feels) leaves her no other choice.

By His example Christ taught to forgive, as He forgave the adulteress (John 8:3-11). The first victim of abortion is the baby, but the mother becomes a

¹¹ *The Post-Abortion Review*, 2(3):4-8 Fall 1994 Elliot Institute, 1994, 54.2% responded "strongly agree"; 14.9% "agree"

victim also. She may not even know the source of her suicidal feelings, anger, depression, or why she wants to destroy her life through alcohol, drugs or sex addiction.

Suicidal feelings are experienced by 56% of women who have had abortions.² We must encourage these women to seek healing through Reconciliation and welcome them back to the Church with kindness.



Burden?or Blessing?

Many of our older people say, "I don't want to be a burden to my family; just let me die and throw me in the ground." Let's put the shoe on the other foot....if you were told that your child had a terminal illness, would you react the same way? Of course you wouldn't, so why are teaching your children to reject your values. Deep down inside you are hoping that they will care for you, but in



*Honor thy father and mother
(that thou may be long-lived
on earth.) 4th Commandment*

humility you don't want to complicate their lives.

Younger people cherish the wisdom of years; don't deny them the Grace that God will bestow on them when they practice the lesson of the Good Samaritan...or the experience of imitating the Mother

² Ibid, 2(3):4-8, Fall 1994 Elliot Institute, 1994

of God when she hugged Christ as he was taken from the Cross. If you love your children you will instill in them the goodness which is God's reflection.



The icon of the Dormition is an example of peace, tinged with sorrow. The opportunity to spend time with the dying is to be cherished; to let a loved one die alone and abandoned is contrary to our Byzantine Catholic belief and tradition.

The Wisdom of Abstinence and Natural Family Planning

Fifty-four percent of women having abortions used some method of contraception during the month they became pregnant. The tiny sliver of all sexually active women not practicing contraception (11%) accounts for the remaining half of all abortions.

According to the 2006 Guttmacher Institute report *Repeat Abortion in the United States*, women having a second or higher-order abortion are substantially different from women having a first abortion in only two important ways: They are more than twice as likely to be age 30 or older and, even after controlling for age, almost twice as likely to already have had a child. (Among all women having an abortion, six in 10 are mothers.)

Just as with women having their first abortion, however, the majority of women having their second or even their third abortion were using contraceptives

during the time period in which they became pregnant. In fact, women having a repeat abortion are slightly more likely to have been using a highly effective hormonal method (e.g., the pill or an injectable).³

*Learn more about Catholic teaching on birth control at
http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae_en.html*

A Better Way.....

Chastity for the unmarried is a best way to avoid pregnancy, AIDS, herpes and other STD's. No problem with failure or forgetfulness. It is healthy, physically, mentally and morally. For married couples, **Natural Family Planning (NFP)** builds respect for your spouse, self-respect and increases fertility success for those who have that difficulty.



*More information on NFP available at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops at:
<http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/marriage-and-family/natural-family-planning>*

³ <http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/gpr/10/2/gpr100208.html>

Scientific Research.... or Human Sacrifice?

Every thing in this world can be used for good or for evil. Stem cell research fits both categories; there is misinformation which deceives us from making good judgment. ADULT stem cell research, which uses cells from adults. shows great promise for healing hearts, diabetes, neurological disorders and other ailments within a decade. ADULT stem cell research is good and can save many lives.⁴



The other type, EMBRYONIC stem cell research intentionally fertilizes a human egg, resulting in conception of a *person*. Researchers then destroy tens of thousands of these *persons* to “harvest” pluripotent cells for their research. The Byzantine Catholic Church teaches that this is EMPHATICALLY WRONG!

***Pro-Life Office
Archeparchy of Pittsburgh***

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Available at:*

www.ecpubs.com or www.godwithusbooks.org

⁴ <http://www.stemcellresearch.org/>